

## **Anthem for Doomed Youth**

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?  
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.  
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?  
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.  
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing down of blinds

~Wilfred Owen

## **The Red Barron**

Look! Look up in the sky!  
Watch your doom, the Red Baron, flying high.

He swoops and dives, dropping bombs,  
All while he flies over the Somme.

Gas, oh the gas!  
He drops it off, watching eyes burn out in the mass.

Red Baron, Red Baron, how the French curse thee.  
And the British, they curse you all day, not even stopping for tea.  
Oh, Red Baron, eighty victories on your side.

Look! Look up in the sky!  
Watch your doom, the Red Baron, flying high.

~Christopher Young

## For the Fallen

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;  
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;  
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known  
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;  
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.

~Laurence Binyon

## Aftermath

*HAVE you forgotten yet?...*

For the world's events have rumbled on since those gagged days,  
Like traffic checked while at the crossing of city-ways:  
And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with thoughts that flow  
Like clouds in the lit heaven of life; and you're a man reprieved to go,  
Taking your peaceful share of Time, with joy to spare.  
But the past is just the same-and War's a bloody game...

*Have you forgotten yet?...*

*Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.*

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz--  
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?  
Do you remember the rats; and the stench  
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench-  
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?  
Do you ever stop and ask, 'Is it all going to happen again?'

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack--  
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook you then  
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your men?  
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back  
With dying eyes and lolling heads-those ashen-grey  
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

*Have you forgotten yet?...*

*Look up, and swear by the green of the spring that you'll never forget.*

~Siegfried Sassoon

## How to Die

Dark clouds are smouldering into red  
While down the craters morning burns.  
The dying soldier shifts his head  
To watch the glory that returns;  
He lifts his fingers toward the skies  
Where holy brightness breaks in flame;  
Radiance reflected in his eyes,  
And on his lips a whispered name.

You'd think, to hear some people talk,  
That lads go West with sobs and curses,  
And sullen faces white as chalk,  
Hankering for wreaths and tombs and hearses.  
But they've been taught the way to do it  
Like Christian soldiers; not with haste  
And shuddering groans; but passing through it  
With due regard for decent taste.

~Seigfried Sassoon

## The Dead

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!  
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,  
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold  
These laid the world away; poured out the red  
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be  
Of work and joy, and that unhopd serene,  
That men call age; and those who would have been,  
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,  
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.  
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,  
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;  
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;  
And we have come into our heritage.

~Rupert Brooke

## **Back**

They ask me where I've been,  
And what I've done and seen.  
But what can I reply  
Who know it wasn't I,  
But someone just like me,  
Who went across the sea  
And with my head and hands  
Killed men in foreign lands...  
Though I must bear the blame,  
Because he bore my name.

~William Gibson

## **Lament**

We who are left, how shall we look again  
Happily on the sun or feel the rain  
Without remembering how they who went  
Ungrudgingly and spent  
Their lives for us loved, too, the sun and the rain?

A bird among the rain-wet lilac sings—  
But we, how shall we turn to little things  
And listen to the birds and winds and streams  
Made holy by their dreams,  
Nor feel the heart-break in the heart of things?

~Wilfred Gibson